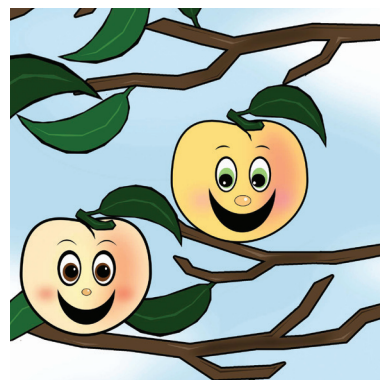


# Imagine This...



## Just Peachy

By Nick O'Brien

2010 Imagine this... Story Writing Contest Winner

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**W**hen I was a young peach, my dad was the president of our orchard in Modesto, California. Our orchard was the best in the fruit nation. With the bees flying all over the place shouting and bossing all the bugs around, the orchard was busy and beautiful.

My best friend was another peach five branches up. His name was Johnson and our favorite game was JumpBranch. Jump-Branch is a game when one peach swings the branch back and forth while the other peach leaps over the branch. It is kind of like jump rope with a branch. My name is Sims and my friend Johnson and I were both Clingstones, which makes sense. The two of us were inseparable, very clingy, and did everything together the whole summer.

Our school, California Gold Elementary, was located on the second branch. Mrs. Freestone was our teacher and she had bright red fuzz and a bruise on her rear. I always liked Mrs. Freestone; she was sweet. Even though some of us were not Freestones like her, she still treated all of the peaches equally. Clingstones were not as popular as the Freestones, but she did not care and taught all of us not to judge a peach by its skin. She never bruised our egos.

Our next branch neighbor was this old peach named Ms. Faye Elberta and was she ever mean! She thought she was better than everyone because she was a part of the Freestone family and her brand of peach was popular with the eaters. Ms. Elberta was always peeking through the leaves on the tree at my friends and me while we played. Every time we really started having fun, she would make rustling noises in the leaves and then spray us with peach juice. She had a fit when she saw us swinging on the branches kicking up peach fuzz.

Two trees away there was a very special peach named Redhaven. She had the best sunlight in the whole field perched high on the tree and all of the peaches talked about how sweet and perfect she must be soaking all of that sun up every day. My friends and I all dreamed about Redhaven.

At the end of the California summer, we saw men picking peaches off the branches. After four days of watching the workers picking peaches, they soon were one tree away from our tree. When the men came to our tree, I was hoping that they wouldn't pick anybody I knew. They picked me and everybody else. No one knew where we were going. The workers placed us all

into a box, then into a truck, and finally into a factory. We were instructed to all participate in a runway fashion show where we would all parade down the runway belt and hopefully get chosen for the “big show.”

Worried that no one would want me, I was very happy when a lady came over and picked me. She placed me in a special pile going to the farmers market. Not all of us got to go to the farmers market, some of my family headed to grocery stores and others to a can of cling peaches. I saw mean old Ms. Elberta going down the fruit cocktail chutes. It was sad saying goodbye to everyone and I shed some tears of juice.

My dreams came true the next day. My mom and dad ended up at the farmers market with me. Rolling out of the giant plastic bin with loads of other peaches, I landed right next to Redhaven! Not only was she sweet on the inside, but also on the outside. We chatted for days until a happy little girl picked me and bought me. After shining me up, she took a big bite out of me and was delighted. Enjoying every bite, the girl talked her mom into letting her plant the peach seed in her backyard. Now I am in the ground waiting to grow into a peach tree. See you this spring!

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